

Pam
India

953

India Today and The Church Tomorrow




By M. P. Davis, D.D.

The Board of International Missions
Evangelical and Reformed Church

1505 Race Street
Philadelphia 2, Pa.

1720 Chouteau Avenue
St. Louis 3, Mo.

AUG 2 1947



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2023 with funding from
Columbia University Libraries

India Today and The Church Tomorrow

Author By
M. P. Davis, D.D.

The Board of International Missions
Evangelical and Reformed Church

1505 Race Street
Philadelphia 2, Pa.

1720 Chouteau Avenue
St. Louis 3, Mo.

Note to Cover Picture

In Mahasamund at the edge of the jungle in the heart of India, in view of the Southern Cross, stands St. Peter's Church. It did not always have a tower. This was built in 1937 by friends in Bellevue, Ky., as a memorial to a cheerful, winsome boy ten years of age who was suddenly taken by death Sept. 25, 1936. In the top story of the tower are crosses carved out of the four walls. During the dark hours of the night a pressure lantern suspended from the center sends out its rays of light through the four openings. Pilgrims travelling on the highway, farmers going to market in their ox carts, and passengers on the evening trains passing nearby are attracted by the cross shining out into the darkness. Observers have noticed: "the darker the night, the brighter the light."

Introduction

"How old are you?" asked the sweet young thing of Dr. Davis after one of his many missionary addresses.

"Well, how old do you think I am?" he countered.

"I don't know," she replied, "but your voice sounds like that of a man of forty-five."

Dr. Davis laughed. "Add to that ten to twenty years and you will have my age."

The interested young inquirer might have detected other signs of youthfulness. "Davis is always interesting," remarked a mutual friend one day. Yes, he is interesting because he has always been interested in life round about him. Dr. Davis has never ceased to ask questions. In this his mind is like that of a person not only twenty but forty years his junior.

This book is another proof of our observation. In it he has set himself the task of finding an answer to the question which should be on the mind of every thoughtful person today: What about the future of the Church in the India of today? His observations and conclusions are based upon many years of study. The reader may not agree with the author in one or two instances, but there is no doubt that he will find ample food for thought as well as a store of information in this compact little volume. Moreover, he will concur in the general conclusion that "In a self-governing India the Church will be in a more advantageous position than ever before to give testimony by her life, service and teaching to the redeeming power of the Lord Jesus Christ in personal, national and international life."

The Board of International Missions takes this opportu-

nity of thanking all those who have made possible by their generous contributions the publication of this valuable booklet for all pastors and lay leaders of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

Theophil H. Twente
for the
Board of International Missions
Evangelical and Reformed Church

June, 1947

Contents

Introduction	3
India Demands Freedom	7
The Primary Problem of Unity	13
The Church Meets with Opposition	16
Directed Opposition	27
Gandhi and Conversion	32
The Church in Indian States	37
The Church Meets More Hindrances	46
The Church Tomorrow	52
The Church as Pioneer	56
Christian Service Impresses India	66
The Church's Message: Peace and Unity	72

India Today and the Church Tomorrow

India Demands Freedom

Events are moving so fast in India that what we now write of "India Today" soon becomes the "India of Yesterday." "Unpredictable" is the word, for new and unexpected political factors emerge almost daily to upset the prophecies of those who think they know which course India is going to take. How different from the India we entered thirty-five years ago! Gandhi was then still in South Africa, battling for the rights of Indians who had been living there for several generations. The Congress Party founded by an Englishman (1884) in order to encourage Indians to take more active interest in politics and the progress of their country, was still a tame debating society on whether social reforms should precede or follow the acquiring of political power. The socially minded enthusiasts lost, the group preferring political power first and reforms later won the day. At that time the "Moderates" were in the majority, favoring cooperation with the British for gradual Indianization of the public services and Dominion Status within the British Empire.

In 1915 Gandhi appeared on the scene. It was not long before he captured the imagination of the masses and became the moving spirit in the Congress Party. He shaped its policy and the goal to achieve *Purn-Swaraj* (complete freedom). "Quit India" was his slogan regarding the English rulers, and *Ram-Raj* for India. (Ram, Hindus believe,

was their Hero-King and Semi-God in prehistoric mythological ages. Hindus enjoyed the "golden-age" during his reign, hence, Ram-Raj.) By 1920 non-cooperation campaigns were in full swing. Gandhi became Congress dictator. In and out of prison was the custom of the day for him, Nehru and other leaders. All compromising offers from London were met with the reply, "We want complete freedom." World War II came. The Congress Party struck hard in 1942, when many thought that England was on the verge of defeat by the Axis powers. It appeared as if Gandhi's dream of *Ram-Raj* was about to become a reality. But during the past decade his slogan had done more harm than he had realized. Moslem leaders had the suspicion and fear that *Ram-Raj* implied a free India in which Hindu culture would overwhelm Moslem culture and the Moslem way of life. Moreover, "The greatest factor that divides the Muslim from the Hindu is a memory of history. The Muslim remembers that there was a Muslim (Mogul) Rule before the Britishers came, and the Hindu remembers that there was a Hindu Rule before there was a Muslim Rule. The conflict that this memory carries is unresolvable in the barren, conventional slogan of Hindu-Muslim-Unity." (The Orient Illustrated Weekly, Feb. 9, 1947.) Moslems feared a Hindu majority rule in a United India, and made demands for *Pakistan*, an independent Moslem state made up of those provinces where Moslems are in the majority. This would mean a divided India. Hindus in turn feared such a Moslem state would link up with similar Moslem states outside India. Gandhi did not become fully aware of the damage his slogan *Ram-Raj* had done, until the devastating riots broke out in Bengal where Moslems are in the majority. Loot, murder, arson, destruction, rape and conversions by force were the order of the day. From September to December tens of thousands were killed and many more wounded. Hindus

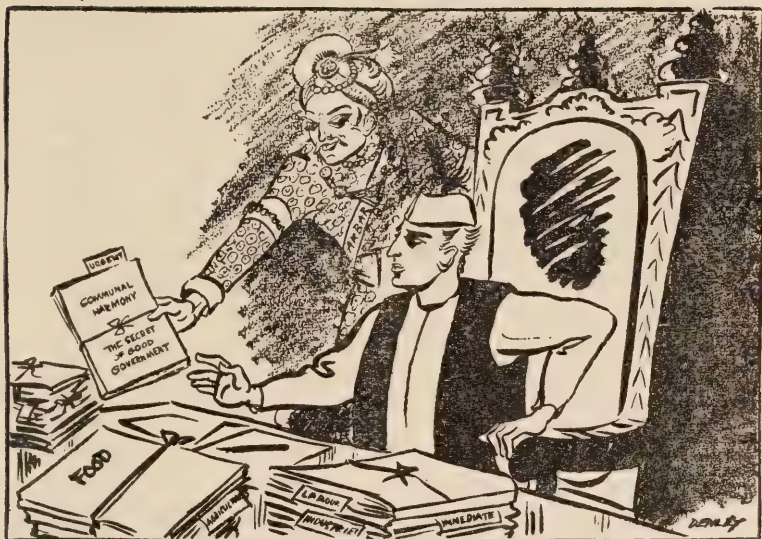
fled from their villages. Later, in the Bihar Province, the majority Hindu groups took revenge in equally inhuman ways against the Moslem minority. Gandhi ceased using the term *Ram-Raj*, allegorizing away its Hindu meaning, in order to pacify the Moslems. But it was too late. Moslems stubbornly demand *Pakistan*. Riots continued to spread in various urban centers.

Gandhi became the most disillusioned man in India. With freedom at the door he had to admit the danger of a civil war, a divided India, Hindustan and Pakistan. Bravely and heroically, under great privations and inconveniences, he faced the facts and undertook tours in the devastated areas of Bengal, seeking to make peace between the Moslems and Hindus, and to persuade the frantic Hindus to return to their villages. He repeatedly wrote in his weekly *Harijan* that he could not understand why the Moslems did not receive him cheerfully, why they continued to distrust him. Never previously in his long public career did he utter such cries of despair as now while continuing his pilgrimage of peace which seemed to be so hopeless. It became the tragedy in the life of this seventy-eight-year-old political saint. In November, 1946, despondency overcame him. "I am living in impenetrable darkness, and see no light at all. I can truthfully say, 'The night is dark and I am far from home. Lead Thou me on.'" The gloom continues. "I never experienced such darkness in my life before. The night seems to be pretty long." (Jan. 5, 1947.) Friends offered to join him in his peace-making efforts, but he declined their offer. "I have dissuaded friends from outside Bengal from coming to see me. I would love to let them come *if and when* I see light through this impenetrable darkness." Several weeks later he confessed, "I am still groping for light; am still surrounded by darkness; groping in darkness myself I have no message for my friends; a

blind man cannot be the best guide." (Harijan, Jan. 26, 1947.) And of his friend Pandit Nehru, who was visiting the riot areas of Bihar, he wrote, "Today Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru finds the ground slipping from under his feet." (Dec. 1, 1946.) The deep division between Moslems and Hindus was frustrating their plans for a great free and united India.

The real point of issue between these two strong religious communities is not one primarily of distrust, but of "balance of power." Regarding reports that during the riots Moslems were converting Hindus by force, Pandit Malaviya, former President of the Hindu Mahasabha, said, "Conversion must be prevented. The Hindus must raise protest against the inroads of pestilence that sounds the death-knell for the Hindus as a *majority* community." (The Hindu, Nov. 1, 1946.)

When the members of the newly elected Constituent Assembly met in New Delhi, Pandit Nehru declared India's goal to be an "Independent Sovereign Republic." Prime Minister Attlee declared it to be the definite aim of Britain to leave India in July, 1948. The time was propitious for India at last to realize its dream of freedom and enter a new day, taking its place along side the other leading nations of the world.—BUT the transition from a divided, disunited India to an Independent Sovereign Republic is not an easy one. Two significant cartoons which appeared in the *Illustrated Weekly of India* vividly illustrate the primary difficulty. Sitting before his desk Pandit Nehru has a stack of important files claiming his attention. A clerk in the form of the Mogul Emperor Akbar (1556-1605, whose reign was reputedly one of good will and peace among both Hindus and Moslems) comes to hand him an "urgent" file marked "*Communal Harmony, The Secret of Good Government.*" It claims Nehru's attention as "Priority No. 1," even



PRIORITY NO. 1



CASTLE IN THE AIR?

in the face of other important files on food, agriculture, labor, and the industrial situation. The second cartoon is even more pertinent regarding the present situation. It bears the title, "Castle in the Air." A Hindu and Moslem have ceased erecting the second-story super structure of "The House of India's Freedom." There is no first story, no foundation, only the weak four bamboo corner poles. Mother India examines the structure and exclaims "Something wrong." The foundation stones lying nearby unused tell the story, *compromise*, *goodwill* and *unity* are missing.

The Primary Problem of Unity

The problem of harmony and unity does not only involve the 205 million Hindus and the ninety-four million Moham-medans (whose claim for a separate State as Pakistan the writer considers unreasonable and impractical). There are many factors involved which make a "United India" for an Independent Sovereign Republic seem almost impossible of achievement. In addition there are fifty million Untouchables, twenty-five million primitive aborigines, 1,500,000 Jains, eight million Christians, five million Sikhs, 232,000 Buddhists, 120,000 Parsees, a similar number of Anglo-Indians and 22,000 Jews. The 205 million Hindus are again divided into thousands of castes which refuse to intermarry or interdine. These many divisions do not provide favorable foundation materials for a republic. One Hindu makes this observation, "The idea of a republic is absolutely alien to Indian political consciousness. Pandit Nehru's scheme for a republic would require the whole social, economic and political set-up to be completely overturned," (Ind. Soc. Ref., Dec. 21, 1946). A correspondent in Gandhi's weekly *Harijan* diagnoses the symptoms in this way, "Our tragedy has been our divisions and differences, and a tendency to subordinate larger national interests to those of caste, creed and party. We give to the smaller units the loyalty that is due to the whole. Herein lies our greatest weakness."

Then also there are more than 562 Native Indian States and hereditary principalities comprising 45% of the total area and 25% of the population. Some of these states are rather small and insignificant, yet have a combined population of over 94 million. What will their attitude and status be in a new India? They certainly complicate the

problem of a "United India." The State of Travancore, for instance, has announced that it will definitely remain an independent sovereign Kingdom; other larger States may do the same. Then again, there is the large State of Hyderabad, the Nizam's Dominions, the population of which is predominantly Hindu but the Ruler, Government and 15% of the people are Moslem. Kashmir has a large Moslem population but the Ruler is a Hindu. Divisions increase as the vociferous communistic groups carry on their aggressive propaganda and disturbances. The beginning of this year Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, (brother of Netaji Subhas Bose who joined the Japanese and formed an army of 15,000 Indians to fight against the British in Burma), resigned from the Congress Working Committee and from the Interim Government Committee to form the new "*Azad Hindi*" party whose aim is the establishment of a Union of Socialist Republics, (Ind. Soc. Ref., Feb. 8, 1947). The industrialists, the labor groups, the Agrarian peasants' party, the Hindu Mahasabha, all have their own selfish interests which they are defending vehemently. The "voiceless" fifty million Untouchables are being courted by many and diverse groups, causing them to be confused more than ever. However, one demand unites them: "Grant us safeguards to protect us from Hindu oppression."

In the face of disharmony and widespread divisions, unity and a Republic do not come into existence through the magic word of a "freedom-declaration," nor does peace replace impenetrable darkness as the result of a political saint's personal distress and voluntary suffering. The Indian Interim Government is struggling with the problem; the Constituent Assembly is studying democratic constitutions with the purpose of creating a United India with equality for all. Unfortunately the 78 Moslem members remained absent from the meetings of the Constituent Assembly (a

total of 385 members) until their demand for a separate Moslem State was granted. India deserves our sincere sympathy, understanding and help. Given these, and spared outside influence and interference, India faces a glorious future, for it has an abundance of ability and loyal, unselfish and farsighted leaders who are willing to place the country's welfare above their own.

The Church Meets with Opposition

What position does the Church hold in this struggle for a free, united India? What role is she playing or will she play in the midst of this turmoil of disunity and divisions that make the task so difficult? What will be her contribution to help create a united, happy India? What will be free India's attitude toward the Church?

It may help us to take a backward look and briefly review Hinduism's "group-attitudes" toward the Church and Christianity from the angle of opposition, which should, however, not cause us to forget or overlook the fact that there are also many of those within Hinduism, countless ones, who are "friends of Jesus" and not far from the Kingdom. If she desires to assist the country constructively, the Church must know and understand the origin and cause of criticism and opposition. She may find that she is guilty of defects which give rise to opposition; she may also at the same time discover inherent gifts which she has not yet fully developed and used for India's welfare.

In attempting to analyze group-opposition we, of course, remember that "group-opposition" may also be the result of opposition from one single individual, of which the following story is an illustration.

While touring in the interior among jungle villages of our mission area, far off the main road, in the heart of India, we arrived in the village of Narra, the residence of a Feudatory Chief. As a result of our experiences there, Mrs. Davis renamed it "Narak," which means "hell." We selected an open spot in the center of the village near the palace for our afternoon and evening program. The medical helper set up his kit of medicines in a conspicuous place, the two evangelists spread a rug on an elevated earthen platform

where the village palavers take place, and arranged an attractive display of Gospels, tracts and other Christian literature. The oxcart driver and our son set up the large 10x10 ft. screen for the colored lantern-slide lecture to be given after the people had finished with their evening meal. The town-crier reluctantly went through the village streets and half-heartedly announced our program. But the response was most disappointing; the atmosphere frigid, the reception given us was practically a boycott. We were consistently avoided, passersby returning from their fields hardly glanced at our set-up even from the corner of their eyes. The women going to and fro with their waterpots to fetch water from the well took a circuitous route some distance away from us, even ignoring the presence of the missionary's wife—a most unusual attitude in hospitable India. Even the children, who always became our best friends and advertising agents, did not flock around us as they do in all villages. Only the animals returning from the grazing grounds favored us with a dreamy look of cursiosity, and that may have been unfriendly, because we blocked a portion of their customary path. Nevertheless the evangelists went from house to house and announced the evening illustrated lecture on the Life of Christ. It was now past the usual starting time. Our group sang several songs loud and lustily in order to attract an audience. A few Moslem men took a casual look at the book display, a dozen youngsters and a number of low caste men sat at a distance waiting to see what it was all about. We went through the program as if the usual two or three hundred guests were present. We began to load the oxcart for the return trip to camp, still puzzled about the only cold reception ever given us. Before leaving the unfriendly village the evangelist told us the whole story, as a friend in the village had whispered it to him. The Brahmin headmaster of the school was feared by

all. During the many years of service in this the only school in the area, he had gained considerable power over the literate as well as the illiterate people. He had influence in the councils of the high Brahmin caste and so dominated the group that their verdict was practically his will when truculent or recalcitrant offenders of caste rules were being punished. He had advance notice of our intended visit to the village and had warned all pupils, and through them the parents and others not to purchase any books, not to attend the lecture, not to fellowship with us in any way whatsoever. Any pupils who did so would be punished by him, and adult offenders would be accused before the caste council and be penalized. His threats and intimidations were successful. Before leaving the place I casually gave a bystander a copy of the New Testament in Hindi with the personal request that he present it to the headmaster with my compliments. I have not heard what effect it had on our invisible opponent.

✓ It is not a simple matter to analyze such opposition, nor can one generalize when trying to speak of all India in assessing or describing the extent of Hindu opposition prevailing against Christianity. Many opponents may not be clear in their own minds as to why they take offense at the Gospel or its messengers. Is it against an advancing, progressing Church as represented by the Christian community, now eight million strong? Is it because many of its messengers come from so-called Christian nations with exploiting tendencies? Can the opposition be against the Bible? Or even against the person of Christ himself? Perhaps many of the opponents are vague in their own minds regarding this matter.

Regarding Hinduism it is necessary to remember that the behaviour pattern of the individual is strictly defined by the whole structure of society in which he lives and within

which every detail of his daily life is prescribed. Hence his caste position dictates certain definite modes of behaviour. This detailed regulation of behaviour into a specialized mode of life helps considerably to create that stability which groups usually desire, but, at the same time it tends to "freeze society into a given pattern, making change incredibly difficult." It perpetuates old ideas, traditional customs and rebels against change.

It can be said definitely that opposition is not directed against Christ, for there are many Moslems as well as Hindus who sincerely and gladly accept Him as one of the world's greatest religious prophets and leaders. Some may have become disillusioned regarding the weakness of the Church in restraining aggressive and exploiting nations of the West. Opposition may be in part against the messengers of the Christian Church and its servants, and this may be largely due to a mental process of transferring resentment from the actual cause itself to its outer manifestations and representatives. In the last analysis it is a fact that opposition is against the Bible and the truth it teaches. And yet, it is not consciously directed against the Bible itself, for the sales of Bibles, New Testaments and Gospel portions in all languages of India have been increasing steadily. To be more precise, opposition arises not so much from what the Bible teaches but rather from the results it produces in those who accept its truths and act thereon. Opposition, in the end, arises from the fact that the Gospel of Christ is a dynamic, an explosive power which is turning the 5,000 year old world of India upside down.

This accounts for the fact that colporteurs, book-sellers and evangelists frequently meet with the reply, "We have been warned not to buy your Bible because it does something to us." This also accounts for the fact that now and then opponents burn, tear up, or otherwise destroy the New

Testament they themselves or their relatives or caste members have purchased or received as a gift. They fear the upsetting results after reading it. We have an analogy in the incidents where depressed class groups made a bonfire of certain Hindu scriptures which they accused of being the cause of their downtrodden condition, for, they rightly said, "These Hindu scriptures have taught the high caste Hindus to despise us." Long ago India learned that reading the Gospel does something to their thinking. In fact Hindu opponents of Christianity, (not to speak of converts) are more cognizant of and convinced of the Gospel's regenerative power in the life of those who accept it than are many liberal theologians of the West.

From a study made of several hundred biographies and autobiographies of converts to Christianity, mostly of the Hindu fold, I made this observation: Orthodox and conservative relatives, members of the convert's family, as well as the private house or temple priest, took no action if the seeking Hindu believed Christian truths, read and studied the Bible at home daily, nor would they in most cases object when he attended church services, provided he went no further. BUT they became resentful and inimical when it led him to cease observing all their millennial old traditions, customs and practices which are so intricately interwoven with all their social practices and detailed home and religious ceremonial life. Hence, we conclude, the primary and final reason for most Hindu opposition is that they cannot bear to see a deflection from their ranks when a true, consistent convert and prospective candidate for baptism is unable for conscientious reasons to observe those rituals and customs which are not in harmony with the teaching of Christ and for this reason make it impossible for him to remain an integral part of the Hindu family and social structure. His conversion and baptism, they contend, vitally

affects the stability and continuity of Hindu group-solidarity. So, his logical step into the Christian Church invariably leads to persecution when arguments fail, to ejection when he refuses to accede to the mass will; the family thrusts him out of home, and the Hindu group puts him out of caste. He is now an out-caste, for all practical purposes, as one who has died. He personally would prefer to remain in the home, a member of the family, without in any way interfering with their religious and social life, but they will not tolerate him. So far as his family, the larger joint-family and all members of his caste are concerned, his determination to translate his Christian belief into corresponding action amounts to outright rebellion against all those who were tied up with him religiously, socially and economically. This independent action of one individual is a volcanic eruption to which contemplative, passive Hinduism, always observing traditional joint-action, is not accustomed. Lately, as we shall explain below, this matter of being put out of caste against the desire and will of the convert, has received a definite political tinge and has seriously, though unnecessarily, aggravated and complicated the whole matter of opposition to conversion.

One might mention a less prevalent reason for opposition, although it is closely related to the one just mentioned, especially if the convert be an only or an elder son. The word for son is *putra*, which means, "he who draws out of hell," that is, he who celebrates that important and vital ceremony after the father's death which prevents him from going to hell. Thus, by performing this particular ceremony the son assures his father salvation. Naturally no father who holds this belief firmly is willing to have his son, upon whom this duty normally falls, neglect so important a ceremony. After becoming a Christian he would not be acceptable for this service.

Being all-inclusive and highly absorbent, Hinduism is ordinarily and traditionally extremely tolerant in matters of belief. It takes pride in proclaiming its wide, inclusive basis that "All religions eventually lead to God and all are equally true." Hindu scriptures teach that God reveals himself to all sincere seekers, no matter under which name or form he is approached or worshipped. Mr. Gandhi is typical of this Hindu belief and attitude: "No religion possesses the whole truth; my Hindu instinct tells me that all religions are more or less true." In the liberal Hindu Brahmo Samaj magazine, *Prabuddha Bharata*, we are assured that "A Hindu can love and honour Christ without changing his faith" (Jan., 1944), by which they mean it is not necessary to leave the Hindu fold and change allegiance from Hinduism to the Christian Church. Hindus are willing to honor Christ by placing Him on the throne of deities alongside their own many incarnations or theophanies. The Hindu can be a theist or pantheist, a polytheist or animist, or even an honest atheist, like the Brahmin Pandit Nehru, and yet be considered a thorough Hindu. Any one of them may be an ardent regular reader of the Bible. It is all permissible so long as it does not lead to a break-away from the Hindu fold. Thus in matters of belief Hinduism is very tolerant. ✓ In the last century B.C. and later the Hindus welcomed Jewish refugees into their midst; they received fleeing Parsees who escaped persecution in their homeland Persia; they tolerated Moslems who settled in their midst peacefully; ✓ they welcomed the Christian missionary more graciously than the mercenary English East India Trading Company who did their utmost to keep them out. BUT, when one of their own number shows too much interest in the Christian Gospel; when he becomes a serious inquirer and begins to take the message seriously; when it begins to affect his religious and social behaviour; when it manifests itself

practically in his daily life and involves a weakening of his hold on the age-old social structure, and most of all, when he contemplates accepting baptism,—THEN opposition in all its fury breaks out, not only against him personally, but also against the Church and Christianity in general. ✓

Furthermore, one must always remember that even though Hindu culture spread as far as Cambodia, Java and Sumatra, ✓ Hinduism is not an aggressive, missionary religion. Conversion is completely foreign to Hindu thought. A Hindu is born a Hindu; no non-Hindu can be made a Hindu in any way whatsoever. A non-Hindu can accept Hindu thought and religion, but he remains an outsider. He never becomes one of them to the extent of intermarrying or interdining. When Nancy Miller was initiated into Hinduism, it was only because her polygamous husband, the King of Indore, was able to find a renegade priest who was persuaded to concoct a ceremony by which she was apparently received into Hinduism. This was done contrary to all Hindu custom and in spite of all opposition from the Hindu public and the Brahmin guild in particular. The validity of the ceremony is still questioned. ✓ In short, because Hinduism itself is not a missionary religion, the idea of conversion is not only foreign, but actually repulsive to the Hindu's thinking. Yet, he may change from atheism to theism, or become a convert from polytheism to atheism, or from idolatry to Vedantism *within* the social structure of Hinduism and not cause a ripple of disturbance, even not among the orthodox.

✓ Another factor frequently enters into the picture and causes opposition because a different form of solidarity is threatened. This is the widespread belief in magic and superstition which resents any interference or non-cooperation. When, for instance, cholera, smallpox or any other devastating epidemic (including hoof and mouth disease among cattle) breaks out in any area, it usually happens

that the official sorcerer is called by general agreement to counteract the danger and to assure safety. In Chhattisgarh a whole village frequently resorts to the ceremony of exorcism to appease the respective offended goddess. Locally it is called *gaon banana*, literally, making the village (safe). A sorcerer is called and after a long discussion a price is agreed upon and every family assessed a certain amount. It may so happen that a Christian lives in that village who refuses to pay the stipulated amount because it is contrary to his religious conviction. They begin to apply pressure; threaten to exclude his cattle from the common grazing grounds; refuse him access to the village well; prevent his wife from washing the family clothes in the village pond or stream; order the barber, washerman and midwife to cease serving his family. He refuses to be coerced or intimidated. He offers to give a donation, much larger than the assessed sum, under the condition that it be used for an orphan, widow or poor family in the village. They refuse the offer. His refusal to take part in the exorcising ritual or even to support it with the levied assessment constitutes a real danger to the whole village; his abstention makes the sorcerer's magic of non-effect, or may cause it to be only partially effective. Sorcerers have warned them frequently regarding the danger of only partial cooperation, hence it must be true. Naturally, the Christian's nonparticipation upsets the frantic villagers, already beside themselves with fright and filled with a spirit of panic due to complete helplessness in the face of the approaching and devastating epidemic which may cause them so great a loss. The cholera goddess, or the smallpox goddess, whichever she may be, must be appeased by all quickly and thoroughly, lest she become impatient and angry and claim her victims. The Christian may even, as he usually does, rush to the missionary, though he be miles away, to fetch medicines, treat and

serve the afflicted patients; they may be ever so grateful for his unselfish and dangerous service, and yet the general attitude, concealed or open, is against him because his non-cooperation causes the ineffectiveness of the sorcerer's charm and magic. He has broken the village solidarity for safety. This superstitious belief in magic may temporarily if not permanently, breed opposition against the Christians in general.

There is another superstition which can become the underlying cause for opposition to Christianity. The following incident is typical. On the bank of a certain creek in a desolate ravine of a jungle superstitious travelers had erected a stone image to the *ghat-devi*, the goddess of the river-crossing. In the course of time passersby heap such a large pile of "offering" stones before the protecting idol to assure safe passage through the ravine that the road becomes partly blocked, and periodically the heap of offerings must be removed. Stone offerings are also placed before the idol for protection from panthers and tigers who use the ravine as their highway. On each daily trip the Hindu public bus driver sacrifices a coconut to the idol, breaks it into bits and passes out a piece to each of the passengers. Christians have frequently refused to accept it, not wishing to be participants in idol worship. In answer abuse was heaped upon their heads; they were considered guilty of breaking the charm and destroying the magic effect of the group-form of worship, thus endangering the safety of all. Especially in the rural areas does this non-cooperation on the part of Christians in Hindu ceremonies create an attitude of opposition and ill will.

Educated and more liberal Hindus may regret such forms of opposition and intimidation of converts, but the character and pressure of the entire Hindu social system makes tolerance impossible. Conservatism, tinged with superstition

always opposes any change affecting a part of or the whole group. Intimidation, pressure, threats and boycott achieve their purpose. And, although a convert to Christianity may not legally be denied his property, the degree of ostracism and persecution which is brought to bear against him is so great that he may be driven from his legal possession and home. (Cf. Neighborhood pressure which squeezes a negro out of a white neighborhood!) It has been openly stated by some Moslems and Hindus that once India has complete self-government, stringent anti-conversion laws will be passed which will stop all conversions and changes of religion.

Directed Opposition

Thus far we have been considering the general reasons for opposition and have made some general observations. Let us now consider the more definite, directed opposition. At present there are three primary organizations which play a prominent part in Hinduism's unpublished program of opposing conversions to Christianity; it is as if they all feel what one has said of Hinduism: "doomed to die but determined to live." Their motives may vary, but their aim is one.

1) The Arya Samaj is a reform Hindu sect containing both liberal and orthodox reactionary groups, the latter being more aggressive in carrying on widespread and definite opposition to Christian mission work. The primary slogan of this modern Arya Samaj movement is, "Back to the Vedas, the original Hindu scriptures; back to the faith of our fathers." At times their aggressive propaganda has brought them in conflict with the police and government authorities. Especially in some of the native states has it become necessary to curtail their activities. Also in British India they have been warned a number of times by the police to be less objectionable in their aggressiveness. Gandhi himself, usually mild and kind in his verdict against those with whom he disagrees said of them in his weekly paper, "The Arya Samaj preacher is never so happy as when he is reviling other religions," (Young India, May 29, 1924). The modern religious scripture of this Arya Samaj group, *Sathyarth Prakash*, written by their founder has several tirade chapters against both Islam and Christianity. The former are so vitriolic that the government of one province with a large Mohammedan population has passed a law forbidding the inclusion of the respective chapter in any

book published or sold in that province. This negative preaching and agitation against Christianity is not approved by all sections of the Arya sect. It is not at all in harmony with their positive, progressive educational and other constructive social work carried on so successfully by the organization in many parts of India.

However, it is well known that a number of Arya Samaj adherents holding high public office have at times been rather unfriendly toward Christians, using their official power and position to influence and enact legislation, especially in Native States, which is adverse to freedom of conscience and religion.

In 1935 the Bihar Provincial Government had to take legal action against some Arya Samaj preachers and propagandists for fomenting trouble by their anti-Moslem and anti-Christian preaching. In 1936 their organization published 1,420,000 pamphlets of eight pages each, bearing the warning title in large print: "Padri Sahib se bacho," flee from, or beware of the pastor (Indian or Missionary). Among other trivial arguments it contains in dialogue form a perverted description of Jesus and accuses Christians of eating beef.—In the July, 1937, number of the International Review of Missions there is reproduced an article from a Hindu magazine written by a Hindu in which this passage occurs: "We should never forget the fact that the missionary is the terrible foe that confronts us," and adds as a reminder to his readers that in the native State of Travancore Christians number more than a million, that Christian churches have increased, while Hindu temples have decreased from 21,000 to 9,000 (perhaps this also includes small shrines?). He honestly admits that the movement among the Depressed classes into the Church is due to the neglect and contempt with which they are treated by their Hindu brothers. The daily papers in April, 1944, contained an interesting

item relative to a fresh impetus given to this resurgent Hinduism as represented by the Arya Samaj: "Seth Jugal Kishore Birla (member of a famous banking and industrial firm) made fifty lakhs of rupees (five million) available for the establishment all over India of branches of the 'All-India Arya Dharma Seva Sangh' under the presidentship of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya" (formerly President of the orthodox Hindu Mahasabha). One can only welcome efforts of any group intent upon improving India's social conditions. As we shall explain in a later chapter, many such noble efforts have been admittedly the result of inspiration given by the example of the Christian Church. Yet one regrets that much of such work is carried on with the underlying motive of obstructing and discouraging the free movement of others into the Christian Church.

2) The Hindu Mahasabha is an orthodox organization, formerly devoted exclusively to religion, in later years it has been swinging over into the political field. Its members at one time fanatically opposed Gandhi's efforts to classify the fifty million outcastes as Hindus. Many of them continue to oppose him in his campaigns to have Hindu temples opened to the low castes by law. Strangely enough, a number of this orthodox group somersaulted from their previous rigid position and favored the so called *shuddhi movement* whereby Hindus and low caste converts to Islam and Christianity could be reconverted and readmitted into the Hindu fold by specially prepared cleansing and purification ceremonies without the penalties usually connected with the rite the few times it was actually used when members strayed away from the fold. Reports appeared in several papers that thousands of Christians were being readmitted into Hinduism through the *shuddhi* ceremony. Close investigations by Indian pastors and missionaries soon revealed that the accounts were greatly exaggerated.

It is significant that in their 1944 annual All-India Conference this orthodox organization passed the following resolution with reference to the new constitution being written for free India: "All citizens shall, subject to public order and morality, enjoy freedom of conscience and free profession and practice of religion, and protection of culture and language, and no law shall be made either directly or indirectly to endow any religion or prohibit or restrict free exercise thereof or give any preference or impose any disability on account of religious status." In the last eight words one can detect a plank in Hinduism's political platform to pacify and lure the fifty million Untouchables, even though it does not imply permission for them to enter Hindu temples. And so far as Moslems and Christians are concerned, the resolution does not necessarily guarantee the right of proclaiming one's faith by preaching and legitimate propaganda. In proposing any new legislation regarding rights of religious groups, orthodox Hindus as well as Moslems are becoming keenly aware of the fact that legislation may also act as a boomerang later on. Any laws enacted to curtail Christian progress under the guise of protecting the Hindu religion and culture may eventually bounce back detrimentally on their own community. At their latest conference they expressed worry and anxiety that a possible socialistic government might develop a desire some day to lay its hands on some of the huge funds now in the possession of Hindu temples and monasteries. It is the writer's firm impression that during his leadership Pandit Nehru is sincerely desirous to be just and fair to all religious groups without fear or favor, and so far as he is able to guide the framing of the new constitution there will be no legislation favoring any one religious community or making any laws that would be to the disadvantage of any one religious group.

3) The Congress Party, which one may still call "Gandhi's party," is officially neutral, so far as its political program is concerned. In fact many years ago it adopted a resolution guaranteeing and assuring freedom of conscience and practice in all matters pertaining to religion, so far as they did not offend public order and morals. But during the past decade events in India have led Gandhi to considerably alter the Congress program of activities, not ostensibly to give the appearance of opposition to Christianity, although in fact it amounts to indirect opposition in so far as the revised policies tend to aid and support all movements whose aim it is to revitalize and strengthen a resurgent Hinduism, especially in its program to win the fifty million outcastes. Contrary to all historical facts, Gandhi now attempted to convince the English Parliament that his Congress Party represented this outcaste group, and that the lowcastes were actually Hindus. But it was a much more difficult task for him to convince the Depressed classes that they were always Hindus, and an impossible task to convince the orthodox Brahmins that the fifty millions were henceforth to be considered Hindus, a part of their religious community.

Gandhi and Conversion

At the beginning of 1932, a heated controversy arose calling forth lively discussion all over India, as well as in Europe and America. The occasion was Gandhi's sudden and unexpected pronouncement which implied that in a future free India evangelistic activities by both Indian Christians and foreign missionaries may be stopped by law. In many different ways he announced this his changed attitude on all possible occasions: "Share your Christian peace with others, but you need not give vocal expression to it. Draw their attention to the best in their respective religions; make a Hindu a better Hindu and a Moslem a better Moslem. Real boundless joy will spread without the vehicle of speech."—In other words, "Stop preaching Christ."

It appears that Gandhi, always a professed friend of Christianity and the missionaries, developed an attitude of opposition in 1932 when scrutinizing the 1931 census report on his way to the London Round Table Conference where a new constitution for India was being discussed. He learned that Hindus and Moslems had increased during the previous decade at the same rate as the population, namely 10%; that the Christians had increased 33%, and that a large part of this increase came from among the fifty million Untouchables, or Depressed classes. Gandhi now gave them a new name, "*Harijan*, God's people." He soon realized that eventually it might make a great difference in a free democratic India, if many more of the *Harijans* became Christians. It might interfere with his long cherished dream of establishing his *Ram-Raj*. In other words, Gandhi, the politician-saint now began to discover the existence and presence of the Depressed classes whom Hinduism had completely disowned for milleniums, and whom the Christian

Church had been quietly and unselfishly serving for nearly two centuries. Hence he put forth terrific effort to persuade all concerned that the fifty "dumb" millions were part of the Hindu group, his brothers.

Against strong opposition of orthodox Hindus, Gandhi carried on an India-wide campaign to have Hindu temples, heretofore barred tight against all Untouchables, opened to them. The latter did not ask for this privilege, nor did many want it. In the beginning some temples were opened, largely to please Gandhi. Some of them were later closed again to the low castes. Others were opened to them only to be avoided by caste-Hindus who refused to worship in them after being defiled by the *chandals* (dog-eaters). Gandhi now launched a nation-wide *Harijan* uplift campaign; he instituted "Village Industry" organizations; he carried on intensive money campaigns to improve the health and economic conditions of the downtrodden; he labored for the unfortunate "undesirables" now become desirable; day and night he toured up and down India during the hot season, enduring heat and inconveniences, chastising Hindus for their coldness of heart toward his "unfortunate brethren," warning them that "unless Untouchability were wiped out, Hinduism deserved to die."

In his interviews with prominent leaders from the West like Dr. John R. Mott, Basil Mathews and others, he preached the same sermon: "Continue all your humanitarian service and your educational work, but do stop preaching and converting, especially among the Depressed classes." This same Gandhi, who in 1928 (namely before the London Round Table Conf.) published in his weekly paper that "If some people for their inward satisfaction and growth change their religion, let them do so"; he who said that he would allow his son to become a Christian if he so desired, under the twofold condition that he would not eat

meat or drink, now when the political condition had become more acute and a course of wise expediency seemed advisable, announced that conversions are "the deadliest poison that ever sapped the fountain of truth," (Harijan, Jan. 16, 1937). In objecting to Christian preaching he rationalized his antagonism as revealed during a conversation with Dr. John R. Mott: "Would you preach the Gospel to a cow? Well, some of the Untouchables are worse than the cow in understanding; I mean they can no more distinguish between the relative merits of Islam and Hinduism and Christianity than a cow," (Harijan, Jan. 9, 1947).

Following his lead in courting the favor of the Untouchables, many of Gandhi's co-workers went to the unreasonable and impractical extent of demanding that the British Indian Government pass an India-wide law at once declaring all Hindu temples throughout British India open to all Outcastes, forgetting that many temples are privately owned by individuals or small groups with officially and legally recognized property-holding bodies. This the Government wisely declined to do. Even now attempts are being made to pass provincial legislation with the same purpose. Since idol worship is a common characteristic of Hinduism, attendance in temples on the part of those heretofore excluded for ages would be an outward way of having them identified and (for political reasons), classified, at least religiously, even if not socially, with Hindus.

Now and then one read reports in the papers, and I saw it spasmodically carried out in our own area, that here and there some of the conservative Hindus temporarily linked up with those holding more liberal views regarding caste-defilement, arranged tea-parties for low caste groups, drank tea and fellowshiped with them in order to demonstrate that the barriers between them were now being broken down and demolished, and proving that Hindus now recognized

the Untouchables as belonging to them. Needless to say, these artificial attempts, seldom repeated by the same Hindus, were soon recognized by those of mere "cow-mentality" for what they were worth.

Alongside his other campaigns to win the "voiceless, dumb millions" for Hinduism, Gandhi inaugurated the Anti-untouchability campaign in order to kill "this caste-monster," to slay the "caste-demon," as he designated the caste system which fosters untouchability. Henceforth "many of his disciples walked no longer with him." Hinduism could not change its spots. Orthodox groups launched movements opposing his program. Weeklies sprung up denouncing his plan as contrary to Hindu scriptures. His campaign lagged. The Hindu secretary of the "Society for the Breaking of Caste" (Lahore) lamented: "One has to admit with great regret that despite the efforts of Hindu reformers, including Mahatma Gandhi, untouchability has not abated much in India. All that has been done for the removal of untouchability has proved as temporary as a line drawn on the surface of water. Our Society has received little or no help from any other body. Even the Arya Samaj, 90% of whose members are deeply rooted in the caste system, have lost interest. It is not Islam, it is not England that has destroyed India. No, our enemy is within us. Priestcraft and caste have slain us." (Ind. Soc. Reformer, Sept. 11, 1946.)

The Church need not worry about any efforts being made by Hinduism or Government to raise the Untouchables. The Church can only welcome any awakening among the Hindus which causes them to put forth more effort to undertake social service among the fifty million now at the bottom of the social scale. By teaching and practicing equality and considerate treatment they are merely taking over a portion of that program which the Church has been carrying on for two centuries to alleviate the disabilities suffered by the

Depressed classes for ages. And even though we have reason to suspect that their motive is a mixed one, desiring to gain entrance for these numerous "undesirables" into the Hindu voting booth via their temples rather than into their homes and society, we do sincerely wish Hinduism as a whole were less apathetic and more energetic in pushing and supporting every program for treating the Untouchables more like human beings.

During the past decade, aggressive political leaders in the front line of India's struggle for freedom have remarked in private and in public that Indian Christians were being denationalized because they did not come forward in large numbers to court arrest and join anti-British non-cooperation movements. We can understand their reluctance. Many of the Christian converts came from among the Depressed classes. They remember the disgraceful disabilities their ancestors and they themselves suffered at the hands of Hindus. They were justified in asking assurance that fair and just treatment will be accorded them in a free India. As this assurance was given, many of them became ardent supporters of the "free India" movement. At the same time Hindu Congress Party leaders entertained fear and suspicion that Christians might form a closed political minority and add to the many political divisions and communal frictions and problems with which India is now overwhelmed. Assured that Christians opposed becoming a separate political unit and that they stood for a strong united India and desired no separatistic, communal representation or privileges, Congress leaders gradually discarded their fears and soon manifested a more congenial and confident attitude toward Christians. Later we shall show that Indian Christians are taking a prominent part in sharing leadership in the present transition period of India's history.

The Church in Indian States

During the past ten years opposition to Christian work has entered a new phase. Keenly aware of the fact that Hinduism is weakening, and in some respects disintegrating, due to increasing secularism, an awakening nationalism elevated to a religion and worship of "Mother India," and to the progress of Christianity, Hindu propagandists have shifted their attention to Native Indian States which comprise one-third of India's area and 93 millions of her population. Until this time the Church made considerable unhindered progress in a number of the States, especially in South India.

Dr. B. S. Moonjee, President of the Hindu Mahasabha, is quoted as saying that "Hindu States are the custodians and protectors of Hindu culture and tradition. It is a position of dignity (for the Hindu kings) comparable to that of the British King when he takes the oath of 'Defender of the Faith' when ascending the British throne," (Ind. Soc. Ref., May 13, 1944). Having this honor and dignity of being the "Defenders of Hinduism" conferred upon them may appeal to some of the 562 independent and semi-independent Hindu rulers, but to their credit it can be said that numbers of them do not choose to play that role in so far as it implies legislation against any non-Hindus in their respective States. Not all of them by any means desire that their State become a stronghold of Hinduism at the expense and to the exclusion of other religions. Only three years ago the Raja of Porbander gave a donation of \$1250 toward the erection of a Church building and later at the dedication thereof delivered a favorable address. Other Rajas have been equally magnanimous and sympathetic. Some of those rulers who allow legislation to be passed unfavorable to the

Christians do not do so willingly or by conviction, but are coerced or advised by Brahmin officers and advisers or Arya Samaj representatives who rank high in State employ. It should also be added that seldom is anti-Christian legislation an expression of public opinion or the result of public agitation. In fact, the public will and opinion in most Indian States are not easily ascertained, and often not allowed to find expression. Where legal disabilities exist, so far as the Church is concerned, they appear to be the creation of a very small minority of influential persons who would like to see the respective State become a protecting and sheltering fortress of Hinduism.

One of the first States to inaugurate such unfavorable laws was Gwalior. In November, 1928, it was reported that "Under present existing laws of Gwalior State no Mission school or medical work can be opened." For over 20 years efforts have been made continually to secure a church site, but officials have always found a way of preventing it. In April of 1929 a bill was introduced which provided that no person could change his religion until he applied to a magistrate for permission. To do so without permission would entail a fine or two years in prison, or both. To be converted outside the State and return again would mean three years in jail, or a fine, or both. Any person using *undue* influence to convert a subject of the State would be liable to three years in jail, or a fine, or both. (The term "undue influence," intentionally vague, could be construed to mean almost anything, depending on the attitude of the prosecuting magistrate.) When, after long debates in the State Council the bill was finally defeated, a member of the Council wrote to a missionary friend: "BUT, no one can say whether further effort will be made to pass a similar bill."

It is reported that Patiala State arranged to pass a similar

law but that a letter from the Viceroy advised against taking such a backward step.

For a number of years before 1928 one of our pastors was employed in Rewa State as a private tutor, but was not allowed to preach or do any form of Christian work. In 1931 one of our Indian pastors purchased a plot of ground in the capital of a certain State. Learning of the legal transaction high caste Hindu instigators began to agitate and exert pressure to induce the State officials to have the sale rescinded and to compel the pastor to surrender the deed. He appealed directly to the Raja himself through the Prime Minister and was allowed not only to retain the plot but also to erect a rest house on the same as well as a home for the watchman. But this permission was granted only upon making the following promise that neither he nor his successors "would take any part, directly or indirectly, in the politics of the State or give rise to friction therein by starting religious activities with a view to making converts to Christianity." Later, in 1936, an ordinance was passed in this same State that no person may change his religious allegiance without first receiving permission on a prescribed form from an especially appointed officer. Only after detailed investigation will permission be granted after the officer has satisfied himself that it is a bona fide case of true, voluntary conversion. The preamble to the law is enlightening: "Because recent conversions have fanned communal fires to such an undesirable extent that communal friction *might* break out" is the law enacted. (It appears that previously ten Catholic priests had entered this State through the back door without permission and had given liberal loans to farmers in order to lure them to Catholicism.)

Since above anti-Christian law was passed, another of our Indian pastors has received permission to rent a house in the midst of the capital itself and to live there while serving

local Christians and others in surrounding villages. But visits to more distant villages are restricted considerably and can not be made without permission after informing the police of his plans.

Another rather backward State in the Central Provinces, where another Mission is doing excellent work among aborigines, framed restricting laws five years ago which make Christian work almost impossible. When the local missionaries interviewed one of the leading officials, the latter confided that the laws would be actually enforced only when it was found necessary to do so. There remains the danger that a capricious or antagonistic official may apply the law any time without assigning any particular reason for doing so. It should be added that the Mission work in the State is still being carried on without undue interference.

Beginning in 1942, during the war period when non-cooperation against the British Government was at its height, at the time when Gandhi and his Congress Party leaders thought that England would be defeated by Germany, more States passed legislation most unfriendly to Christians. They all had one primary purpose: to stem the tide which was actually a mass movement into the Church. True enough, in many States these laws were liberally construed and lightly enforced, often depending on the officer in charge of administering such a "Conversion Act," also called "Freedom of Religion Act." But such laws continue to hang dangerously over the heads of Church servants like the sword of Damocles.

A large State in the Province of Orissa having a large number of Christians, many of whom belong to our churches, published such an "ACT" before it was made known to the public. It includes severe conditions like the following:

- 1) An applicant for conversion will be investigated by the police.
- 2) Children of converts will become wards of the State.
- 3) A wife will be examined separately by a magistrate.
- 4) In case one parent dies and the other is converted, relatives or the State will take over any minor children.
- 5) No convert is allowed to give a son to a relative for legal adoption.

This act was euphemistically called "State Freedom of Religion Act." After it received the Raja's signature, thereby becoming effective, several representatives of various Missions concerned, requested an interview with the Raja and his officers; at the same time they presented a written "memorandum" suggesting that some of the above severe provisions be eliminated, especially the first three. Knowing the "third degree methods" of some police in the rural and backward areas the Christian representatives declared procedure No. 1 to be definitely dangerous. Moreover, the provision that children be taken away from parents who wished to become Christians was cruel and medieval. Furthermore, for a university trained male officer to cross-question an Indian woman alone, especially an illiterate timid woman of backward tribes and areas, would appear to be most inconsiderate and unseemly.

Five months later a reply was received to the written objections which had been left with the Raja for his kind consideration: "The Maharaja and Ruler assures the Memorialists (the Indian pastors and missionaries who had interviewed him) that he was actuated by the same high sense of duty in passing the Act in question as in maintaining religious freedom in all its glory. He never meant to deviate from his old policy of religious freedom, but simply desired to regulate it, in order that everybody could enjoy religious liberty to its fullest extent. The Maharaja also felt

the Act was necessary since the *Shuddhi* movement to recon-vert Christian converts back to Hinduism is spreading all over India and that he felt the need to regulate matters in order to avoid unpleasantness between various religious communities." The reply reminded them furthermore that "the States Kotah, Bikaner and Raigarh have such an Act on their statute books." The letter was signed by the Maharaja's Chief Minister (who is an Arya Samajist). Later information reached us that the British Political Agent had advised the Maharaja to revise those portions of the Act which were indeed too severe.

A friend and neighbor missionary working in a certain Native State not far from our Mission field informed me in 1942 regarding the notification he had received from the British Political Agent who had the temporary administration of that State in his hands: "The activities of the Mission should be confined to the medical treatment of lepers generally and to missionary activity only among those lepers who live within the Mission area. Missionary activities should not be undertaken anywhere among non-lepers." In his reply the missionary concerned pointed out that "this would curtail and prevent all evangelistic endeavour in bazaars and villages, for the order reads 'anywhere among non-lepers,' and that we could never agree to this restriction, as we must be ready and willing to minister to the needs of body and soul of all men any time and in any place." Apparently he received no further official reply to this protest.

It happened in another State in 1943 that two of our evangelists who had been working there for some time were suddenly ordered to leave the State. An ordained pastor living outside the State was reprimanded by State officials for visiting Christian families in two villages within the State without permission. The Indian official concerned was the

same one who was partly instrumental in having the Conversion Act passed when he was employed in a neighboring State.

In Moslem controlled areas the attitude is no different. When the Mohammedan leader, Dr. Khan Sahib, at one time Prime Minister of the North West Province, allowed his daughter to marry an Indian Christian a Muslim newspaper made this startling pronouncement: "If ever the criminal law of Islam is established in India, then such sensualists who, in order to satisfy their lusts, trample the law of God and honour of Islam, will be publicly stoned to death as a warning to others and their corpse cast into an open field to be fed upon by crows and kites." (It may not be generally known that the daughter of Mr. Jinnah, president of the Moslem League, also married an Indian Christian.)

An advertisement recommending people to subscribe to the *Moslem Review* included this marvelous statement to solicit greater Moslem support: "It is the paper which has exploded the established dogmas of the Cross and has demolished the fabric of Christianity." This astounding claim was made in the same decade (1931-41) when the Muhammedan and the Hindu population both increased 10% and the number of Christians 33%.

During 1944 more Native States enacted legislation in order to curtail and hinder mission and church work. In another Native State along the northern portion of our mission area there are a number of Christians but no resident pastor or evangelists, and strict rules were laid down governing and regulating their visits from beyond the boundary into the State:

- 1) To visit a sick Christian he must first inform the police at headquarters.

- 2) Permission may be granted to visit a specified place only once a quarter. But in making such a visit he must not tour among other villages.
- 3) The visit must not extend beyond 48 hours; if unavoidably delayed, he must inform the police and give reasons for the delay.
- 4) No visit longer than 96 hours may be made without permission, and then he may visit Christians only, but carry on no preaching or propaganda among non-Christians.
- 5) Only ordained priests (pastors or missionaries) are granted above privileges, not lay preachers (namely unordained evangelists).

Such Acts apparently do not (or cannot) prevent lay Christians from speaking about their faith privately to others within the State.

The Dewan (Chief Minister) of Travancore State wrote a book on "World Religions" regarding which a Christian editor remarks that in it "Christ and Christianity are belittled if not ridiculed." It was translated into Malayalam, the language of the State and the rumor spread that it is to be used as a textbook in schools. Among other things it makes derogatory statements about Christian doctrines and customs, stating that the Gospels are not authentic, that they contain contradictions, that Christmas and Easter are borrowed Mithra (heathen) feasts; that the Virgin birth is a myth, that the recorded miracles are not true miracles, etc., all old criticisms borrowed from Western agnostic writers of a century ago.

In 1946 this same State, Travancore, having a very large number of Indian Christians whose history dates back many centuries, enacted stringent laws fencing in their growth from all possible angles:

- 1) No place may be used for public worship, if it be situated within one mile of a temple, mosque or church now in existence.
- 2) No permission will be granted to build a church unless it be for a major portion of the people of the locality belonging to that respective denomination, and at least 100 families would benefit thereby.
- 3) No place can be used for public worship without official sanction.
- 4) No cemetery or crematorium shall be erected or used within 2 miles of any temple, water source, school or other public institution.

Catholics and Syrian Christians who were accustomed to make a pilgrimage by foot annually from this State to the grave of the Apostle Thomas were refused permission this year to do so. To circumvent the order they hired buses and made a comfortable pilgrimage in a more convenient way!

Travancore's neighbor, orthodox Cochin, passed a law (1946) the import of which is not quite clear to the writer: "The Staff Selection Board is extended to private schools (which include Mission schools) whether receiving Government grant or not; it will also make staff appointments directly according to a system of communal rotation." The following note is appended to the Act: "Schools with Convent Sister teachers are exempt, likewise Vedic schools of the Namboodiris (Brahmins) in which the principle of caste restriction will be respected." We cannot say if this law implies that non-Christian teachers will be assigned to Christian mission schools, nor can we say how it will affect the employment of Christian teachers in both Christian and Government (public) schools.

The Church Meets More Hindrances

In British India there were also sporadic efforts to curtail mission work, especially when it might lead to conversion. Many Provinces adopted the so-called "Conscience Clause," in itself a harmless and justifiable provision. According to this law no pupil need attend religious instruction in any mission or private school receiving financial aid from Government, unless parents so desire. Should a parent object to his child attending a daily Bible class in a mission school, he or she might so declare in writing to the headmaster at the beginning of the school year. Our own fifty mission schools were not affected by this law, as very few non-Christian parents objected to Bible instruction.

Before the 1941 census was taken, it was necessary to instruct many Christians in detail, especially the less literate ones, how to inform the census takers that they are Christians. Hindu enumerators were not always willing to have them entered as such. This was especially the case in Bengal, where the Mohammedans and the Hindus are almost equal in number. In some North West Indian villages Christians were intimidated and frightened until they reluctantly allowed their names to be entered on the census rolls as Hindus, being wrongly told that "Hindu" and "Indian" meant the same thing. A number of them who insisted that they be recorded as Christians were compelled to leave the village. In Assam an English tea planter advised his Christian laborers to be sure to have their names entered as Christians when the census officer came to gather reports. At once local Hindu Congress Party men sent a complaint against him to his Board of Directors in Calcutta, accusing him of interfering with the census work.

In a village, near our Mission settlement Bisrampur, a

Christian evangelist settled on some land he owned there, but the village-chief tried his utmost to prevent him from drawing water from the well in a field nearby, hoping by such harassment to drive him from their midst.

Some years ago the Bombay City Council refused to sanction further grants to the six welfare centers of the Y.M.C.A., or to the Congregational School for the Blind, or to the Salvation Army Rescue Home, because they carried on Christian propaganda.

When a number of Christians in the Madras Presidency were readmitted into the Hindu fold by the rite of "Shuddhi," the Hindu Prime Minister congratulated them publicly, adding the remark: "Our ancient Dharma (religion) is the clearest and shortest way to the Divine." A number of Hindus openly criticized him and resented the fact that a person in his high public position should commend the incident publicly.

The following case reported by a missionary is quite typical of many more like it in all parts of India. "Every one in the village was friendly, UNTIL they began to see that some of their people were actually taking the Christian message seriously. THEN opposition arose. One young Hindu inquirer, Panka by caste, was forcibly removed to a distant village at two different times to prevent his being baptized."—In one of the villages of our area two evangelists had been going to visit a group weekly for Bible instruction. About thirty adults were ready to accept baptism, when one night several of their priests had a whole-night session with them. What transpired we do not know. The evangelists were no longer welcome, no one would fellowship with them. It is surmised that they were frightened and cowed into submission by intimidation and threats of being ostracized in all their relationships.

In May, 1946, Pandit Nehru, Congress leader in the new Interim Government, made this assuring statement: "Indian Christians need have no qualms about their religious freedom in an independent India. Congress's aim is a secular State, not to be identified with any particular religion; freedom of conscience and recognition of the religious rights of all citizens must be the starting point." Later, during an interview with several Indian Christian leaders he supplemented above policy with this remark: "You may convert Hindus to Christianity, and Hindus will have the right to re-convert them again."

In spite of all political statements and assurances regarding freedom of conscience and religious freedom, a storm arose in Bombay a few years ago when two young Parsee women, students in the Catholic Sophia College, became Christians. The Bombay University Senate (governing body) voted 53 to 41 to disaffiliate the college from the university, accusing the nuns of having "influenced" the girls to be baptized. The Bombay Provincial Government refused to recognize the action of the University Senate. They then re-affiliated the college again, conditionally. Dr. Edwards, editor of a Christian weekly made a pertinent observation in this connection: "The (Hindu) editor of the Indian Social Reformer complains against the 'influence' of the life of the nuns on the students (namely in causing them to think of and feel favorably towards Christianity). This his attitude against 'influence' goes even beyond Mahatma Gandhi's mandate, which was that the Christian life must appear as the fragrance of the flower in its virtues, not by preaching and conversion. Now let us know what Christians must be and do—hewers of wood? and drawers of water? But even hewers may exert 'influence.'"

It is difficult at times to differentiate between a "fragrant Christian influence" and "active Christian influence." After

perusing an annual report of The Mission to Lepers the above mentioned Hindu editor found himself in a quandary regarding the two types of influence. He accused missionaries of "Proselyting and of aiming to destroy the spiritual heritage of the Hindu people in which alone their religious life can find root and sustenance." Such "active influence" he objects to, another kind of "active influence" he would like to classify as being of the "fragrant type" which silently and modestly makes its presence known. He continues: "The Mission to Lepers, however, is an expression of pure humanitarianism untainted by any ulterior motive. Neither Hinduism nor Islam has anything comparable to show, and, so long as this is the case, Christianity must be allowed precedence from a purely humanitarian point of view."

Sometimes irresponsible persons may cause opposition to flare up suddenly without any apparent cause. On a sacred pilgrimage route leading up into the Himalayan mountains is the holy city of Brindaban, held sacred by all Hindus. In this city on the side of the road a Hindu convert, Rev. Chakravarty, conducts a rest house, library and ashram for any pilgrims who wish to make use of the same. One day, without any warning whatsoever malicious incendiarism caused the building to be destroyed by fire, all contents being lost. Christian friends aided him financially, so that the work could again be carried on and Christian service to the pilgrims be continued. Several years later 12 to 15 students came in broad daylight, broke open the library and removed all the contents. While doing so they continued shouting: "Stop selling and circulating Christian books. Join our movement and distribute Congress literature."

During the 1946 riots between Hindus and Moslems in Calcutta, an irresponsible youthful mob broke into a Methodist church and set fire to the benches, altar and pulpit,

destroying the hymnbooks and other property. Considerable damage was done. Both Hindu and Moslem leaders denounced such vandalism, the public was shocked, and Congress leaders offered to pay for all damage done. During later riots between Hindus and Moslems not one Christian was molested, rather a remarkable fact when one remembers that thousands of non-Christians lost their lives in various parts of India.

It is almost pathetic, also humorous, how hurried legislation may have unexpected but far reaching results in affecting the work of the Church. The Bengal (Moslem controlled) Provincial Government passed this strange law: "Future textbooks used in Primary and Secondary schools must not contain illustrations of any prophet mentioned in the Koran." It so happens that the name of Jesus also occurs in this Moslem scripture, consequently no picture of Jesus may appear in any of the above mentioned textbooks. The non-Christian newspaper bringing this news item regretfully added the comment: "This order excludes the picture of the Crucifixion which has evoked feelings of reverence among the students of the schools in Bengal."

In a signed document eight lawyers lately complained to the editor of the Christian weekly "Epiphany" for stating in an answer to a question that "Hinduism is wrong and that if a Hindu does get salvation it will be through the mercy of God and not through Hinduism." The lawyers demanded a "withdrawal of the highly defamatory statement and an unconditional apology for the insulting words." The Christian editor replied in part as follows: "The question is: How can man be saved? Hinduism has tolerated many alleged means of gaining salvation. There is the *Way of Works*, bathing in sacred rivers, pilgrimages, *puja* (worship of idols), almsgiving,—these cannot deliver man from sin. There is the Hindu *Way of Knowledge*, but man

cannot think himself out of sin. There is the *Way of Bhakti* (adoration and devotion). Religious emotional excess may bring temporary oblivion, but sin still remains. In Hinduism we may see all the means man has devised to free himself from sin, and they are all failures. There can be no other remedy for sin, no other Saviour than Jesus Christ; Acts 4: 12.—Our anxiety is not for those who, having no opportunity for hearing, have lived up to the best ideal they have known, but for those who, having heard and recognized, have refused to follow Christ, for reasons of worldly prudence or cowardice.”

Thus, in the last analysis, it would seem that opposition ✓
to the Gospel message and the Church is due to the fact that when it is accepted and becomes dynamically effective in the life of the convert it disturbs the status quo of Hinduism's and Islam's social structure,—and in not a few opponents the Gospel awakens the conscience to a sense of guilt in the presence of the Holy God and His Christ which the average person resents. It is rebellion of the natural man, unwilling to become a bondservant of the Lord.

The Church Tomorrow

What then will be the position of the Church tomorrow in a free India of countless divisions, in the "house divided against itself"? Will she merely be tolerated, or will her contribution towards India's unity and general welfare not only justify her existence, but also commend her to the good will of both the public and the Government?

Even in the face of uncertainties and many speedy changes, even in the face of opposition against the Church in the past, I firmly believe that the Church may look forward to a greater future than she enjoyed in the past. Let us first briefly review some of the possibilities in the near future, political and with reference to the Church.

1) If the Moslems continue to insist on their demand that the predominantly Mohammedan area form a separate State and Government, Pakistan, it may lead to civil war. Should the separation occur, peacefully or otherwise, Christian work in Pakistan may become as difficult as it now is in other Moslem countries like Egypt and Turkey, hedged in with a multitude of prohibitions.

2) There may be spasmodic and sporadic disturbances against Christianity anywhere in India, fomented by irresponsible hooligans seeking loot; or even by misguided national enthusiasts who have been misled into thinking that Christianity "denationalizes" those who become Christians. Such outbreaks would be purely local.

3) A compromise plan may be adopted to create a number of independent political units which together will form a federation of "States" (with a uniting, though weak "Center"), among which might be: Pakistan, various large separate Native States, grouped smaller States, and a

number of separate Provinces formed geographically on a language basis.*

4) In a united (or divided, or federated) India there will be so many urgent tasks and problems requiring constructive thought and effort that questions regarding the Christian Church, its position and its work will appear as a minor, insignificant issue in governmental and public life compared with the more urgent and important matters of political unity, agriculture, food, unemployment, poverty, health, education, foreign trade, industrial progress and development of her rich natural resources, all of which vitally affect the whole of India.

5) Perhaps the Indian Government, and most certainly the Indian Church will ask that complete control and full leadership of the Church be entrusted to the hands of Indians. The Church will also ask to have the deciding vote regarding the return of individual missionaries who are in the homeland on furlough. She will also urge that church union be pushed even faster than in the past. The missionaries, the home boards, and the sending and contributing churches of the West will surely approve these demands, all of which can only strengthen the Church.—(Church union has made more progress in India than in America. There are for instance: the South India United Church with a membership of 980,000; the United

* On June 3, after above paragraph was in print, Prime Minister Attlee made a public statement in London that power will be transferred at once on a temporary dominion-status basis permitting the partitioning of India into Hindustan and Pakistan. On the same day this compromise agreement was broadcast to the Indian people by Nehru representing the Hindus, Jinnah the Moslems and Baldeo Singh the Sikhs. They admonished their followers to become calm and cease rioting.—This new turn of events may cause the Indian States to follow a cautious course of watchful waiting before making a definite decision. While some of them may prefer complete independence, others may choose dominion status, and others may become a part of Hindustan or of Pakistan.

Church of Northern India, 350,000; the Lutheran Federation 420,000).

6) Government will probably take over *all* primary and secondary education; permit and supervise private and mission schools but grant no subsidy from public funds for part of their support. Exclusively Christian schools under church management will have to raise their own funds.

7) Political leaders will keep their promises that India will be a secular and not a religious State. Freedom of conscience will be assured. Freedom of worship and propaganda will be permitted within reasonable limits which do not offend against law, order and public morals. It will be forbidden to offer material inducements to cause conversions.

8) Seeking world trade, progress and profits, Indian industrialists and bankers will support no Government which invites a "Kultur-Kampf" between or against religious groups.

9) In the past India has always given recognition to and welcomed ability and unselfish leadership irrespective of its source. Christians of outstanding merit have been given positions of responsibility and leadership in the past. In some cases their influence exceeds their proportionate numbers. For instance, of the Indian delegation to the UN meetings in New York, two were Christians; one of the delegates to the UNESCO conference was an Indian Christian woman; the speaker of the Orissa Province Legislative Assembly and two ministers in other Provinces are Christians; one of the 14 members of the Interim Government is a Christian; likewise the Vice President of the Constituent Assembly, in fact he was the only candidate in the field; of the 50 initial persons selected for the Minorities Committee of the Constituent Assembly six are Christians; this means

12%, whereas Christians form only 2% of the population.

10) As the consolidated Sikh community numbering five millions is receiving recognition and attention, there is no reason for eight million Christians to worry about their future, as long as they are loyal to their motherland.

11) It may be difficult to prophesy what steps the Native States will take regarding a united India, but regarding the Church I venture to believe that all the more progressive rulers will take a liberal attitude toward the Church, having recognized that capricious autocracy of the middle-age type can not continue to exist in or alongside a free modern republic.

12) The Church will ask for no favors, no special privileges. It will not seek interference or moral support or influence from outside India should it have to face persecution. The Church will trust India's statesmen and not be dismayed because of possible petty annoyances by local officials. Intelligent and informed India will not forget what the Church has done for its welfare in the past; a grateful India will wish to see the Church prosper. When for instance the All-India Christian Conference met in Bombay lately, they received messages of good wishes from the following and other leading Congress leaders: Pandit Nehru, his sister Mrs. Pandit, Mrs. Naidu, and from the Hindu Premier of Bombay Presidency.

The Church as Pioneer

What are the contributions which the Church has made in the past for which a free India will be ever grateful and be justified in anticipating even greater things?

First, it must be said to the credit of the early missionaries that they gave their work a very comprehensive and inclusive character which concerned itself not only with the soul and spiritual matters, but also to a large extent with the physical and economic welfare of the individual and the community.

The primary gift of the Church to India is the appreciation of personality and the value of the individual, irrespective of his status in life. The day of ridiculing and despising the missionary and the Indian pastor for being concerned with and fellowshiping with Untouchables is past. Mission schools, the Church in its social congregational life have taught equality of treatment and opportunity that has altered Hindu thinking considerably. In all Mission schools, hospitals, dispensaries, hostels, etc., no one class was or is given preference, no upper group given privileges or shown favors,—each person gets his turn; caste, prestige, dignity, education, wealth, position could claim no preferential consideration or treatment. In this appreciation of the value of personality and of each individual, irrespective of social standing, the Church was definitely the pioneer. It is impossible to overestimate its far reaching influence in Indian public and social life today. It can be best expressed by relating a certain incident in detail. The famous Dr. Wankar adhered strictly to this custom of equal treatment from the first day he opened his medical work in Miraj, Bombay Presidency, even though in the beginning high officials and wealthy princes turned away from him in disgust the first

time they met with such treatment; to have to wait until their turn came and allow low caste patients prior treatment because they had come early was to them criminal and most insulting. About six years after such consistent procedure on the part of Dr. Wanless the Maharaja of Kolhapur Miraj had become so deeply impressed by his impartial and kind treatment of the Untouchables and all classes alike, that he made a historical proclamation and ordered it published and displayed in all public places of his realm (about 1895): "Be informed that, at all public buildings, charity rest houses, public Government inns, etc., and river watering places, public wells, etc., no defilement on account of any human being is to be taken account of. Just as in *Christian hospitals and schools*, and as Dr. Wanless Sahib, in the American Mission, treats all with the same love, so also here they are to be treated as not esteeming any unclean." Dr. Wanless' biographer continues: "Brahmins stormed their protests: 'His Highness is unreasonable! The Untouchables are but as filthy dogs. We cannot treat them otherwise! They can never be our equals.' The Maharaja had known from the beginning that it would be impossible to enforce the law. However, it was a step forward. It would make his people think." (Wanless, page 271.)

As referred to in the Maharaja's proclamation, this custom of serving all classes impartially "with the same love" was and is observed in all Mission institutions. All classes meet on the same level. The Church thus serves as the outstanding agency for creating good will and unity. This fact is best demonstrated at the time of celebrating HOLY COMMUNION. There one sees the converts united at the Lord's Table: Moslem, and Hindu, high caste and low caste, Brahmin and Untouchable, men and women, rich and poor; they who were formerly separated, divided, aloof

from each other religiously and socially, are now as one family in Christ. UNITY is thus the second great contribution the Church is making in a distracted, divided India, especially in her service to the Untouchables who, as converts, can more easily be integrated into the higher social life of India. An observing Hindu, L. G. Rao, has expressed the transition very well in one simple sentence: "When a Harijan becomes a Christian he is educated and goes about with a cultured deportment doing useful work in society and we dare not treat him as an Untouchable," (I. S. R., Feb. 26, 1944).

By placing a high value on personality and respect for the individual, the Church has changed India's outlook on the fifty million undesirables. Let Dr. E. Stanley Jones tell us what he sees on his continued travels to all parts of India: "It is true that we have done more for the Untouchables than any one else. This is not boasting. It is a humble fact. When no one would go near them, long before people became interested in them, namely because of communal potentialities, the followers of Christ of both East and West have sat in their huts (as no caste Hindu would do), have eaten their humble meals (as no Hindu would do), have sat at their wedding feasts, amid smell and degradation, till far into the morning to keep them from drink and debauchery. They have taken their children and sent them to schools by the tens of thousands, until those children have grown up and have become teachers of Brahmins, of Europeans, respected and honored, and loved. They have become pastors of churches, and have spiritual oversight of these from the high castes, their ministry accepted because of their character, ability and piety. They have become officers of municipalities composed largely of higher castes, some of them sacred cities. This, too, because of their integrity and character. They become bishops in our

churches, heads of our institutions, chairmen of our assemblies, leaders in our movement. Christian women from among the outcasts have been the *pioneers* in women's education, they fill the municipal schoolrooms everywhere, to which the children of high castes come. Look into the faces of an intelligent Christian audience on a Sunday morning and see the reverence and respect and culture, refinement and real piety; and then remember that back of that audience is the grass hut, drink and degradation, poverty, fatalism and hopelessness.—Something has happened here. A new power has broken the tyranny of inferiority complex, of inhibitions, of fears and has made these people the children of God, members of God's family, the door of the future wide open."

Because the Church carried out a consistent policy of educating her youth, it is interesting to note that although the Christians form only 2% of India's population, their advanced education has brought them to the forefront far out of proportion to their numbers. For instance, 16% of the personnel in the Royal Indian Navy are Christians, and 18% of the Royal Indian Air Force. Once India ceases to vote on religious, communal lines, she will be better able to appreciate what the Church has done to elevate millions of her despised Untouchables. Our own Church has played a noble part in this type of work. Remembering that the Chamar and Satnami Untouchables of our area are excluded from all the privileges enjoyed by caste Hindus, it is enlightening to read the results of mission work among them as a recent survey made by the writer so plainly reveals. Of 3,500 Christians, second and third generation descendants of low caste Chamars and Satnamis, 700, or 20% are in school; a very high porportion, as the percentage for the whole of India is only 4%. Of the non-Christian Chamars and Satnamis of this same area only 11½% attend school.

Again, whereas the literacy for this area is only 8%, it is 40% for the whole Christian group. For the whole of India it is only 13%. Due to the advanced education among these 3,500 Christians of low caste origin their economic condition had advanced far beyond that of their former caste fellows. Among the 3,500 there are: 112 masons, 66 men teachers, 75 trained evangelists, 48 carpenters, 44 tailors, 10 auto drivers, 14 women teachers, 15 Bible women, 30 nurses and 4 ordained pastors.

In all branches of work established by our pioneer missionaries they rigidly observed the same rule of equal opportunity for all. Even when high caste Hindus withdrew their sons from mission schools because they did not wish them to mingle with those of inferior castes, missionaries insisted that the low caste pupils remain. Gradually those of higher castes returned again. In fact some of the children of these same caste Hindus are now being taught by converts from among the Chamars.

It would require a book to record in detail the history of all the branches of work in which the Church and Missions in India have been pioneers. Here is a list of the more important ones:

- 1) Female education
- 2) Adult education
- 3) Progressive, modern education
- 4) Vocational training
- 5) Village uplift work
- 6) Rural reconstruction
- 7) Leper work and out-door clinics
- 8) Village nursing
- 9) T. B. Sanatoriums
- 10) Orphanages
- 11) Training of nurses

- 12) Child welfare work
- 13) Training widows for public service
- 14) Rescue Homes
- 15) Widow Homes
- 16) Social work among criminal tribes
- 17) Day nurseries
- 18) Homes for the blind
- 19) The first printing press in India to manufacture and use type for India's many languages was established by William Carey, 1792, and still exists as the Baptist Mission Press in Calcutta, printing Christian literature in 40 languages.

20) One of the oldest Indian Life Insurance Companies was established in 1892. Originally limited to Christians, it later included non-Christians.

21) Lately Government and a few private non-Christian organizations have begun to conduct eye-clinics at various rural centers where there are no hospital facilities. Our own and other mission doctors have conducted such clinics, especially for cataract cases, with marked success for more than 15 years. The same holds true of rural leper clinics, and medical auto vans which make regular trips and halts at prearranged times and places to serve the rural population.

22) Removal of untouchability.

At a recent meeting of the "All India Women's Conference" the members gave expression to their great joy that the Bombay Legislative Assembly passed a law forbidding polygamy. Monogamy is now the rule, a custom strictly observed by the Christian Indian Church since the beginning,—also a result of respecting personality according to the teachings of Christ. But the above mentioned conference complains that Hindu law-makers have still more to

learn from the Christians: "According to Hindu law a widow is entitled to maintenance only from her husband's will. We women, as a class, have been denied social justice. Rules of inheritance for Christian widows suffer no restraint of alienation as in Hindu law. With them the estate is equally divided between male and female children after one third is set apart for the Christian widow. Nor is there a difference made between sons and daughters or brothers and sisters in the Christian community. And regarding causes for divorce no distinction is made between male and female as in Hindu law" (Roshni, page 84, 86, Dec., 1946).

In her book *Challenge to Women* Miss Amrit Kaur, daughter of the palace, an outstanding Christian leader in the women's movement, writes as follows: "The origins of the earlier (women's) movement may be traced to the work of early social and religious reformers . . . also to the great (Christian convert) Pandita Ramabai whose monumental work in Poona is a glowing example of the capabilities of India's womanhood, . . . and last, though not least, to the influence, direct and indirect, and work of Christian missions. The pioneer work of missions . . . is now being increasingly reinforced by Indian efforts."

In all above listed branches of Christian service the Church laid the foundation, did the pioneer ground work, proved that it could be done, and established them on a sound, lasting basis, always upholding the Christian principle of serving all equally without distinction. It is to the credit of the Church that after observing such exemplary work done by Christians, Government and private organizations invariably followed the Church lead and took up one or more of such types of work, and developed them, in some cases also improved them, on a larger scale than the Church was able to do because it lacked sufficient funds and personnel.

Countless Indians are also thankful for the education they themselves received and their children are now receiving in the following Mission institutions conducted by the Church: 14,600 primary schools, 465 middle schools, 301 high schools and 34 colleges.

In 1946, 88% of the nurses, trained and in training, were Christians supplied from among the 8 million Christians (380 million non-Christians supplied the other 12%).

There are 450 Christian Indian and 280 missionary doctors serving in Mission hospitals. More than 350 doctors, so urgently needed in India, are being trained in Christian medical colleges and hospitals. Most of the 62 leper homes and hospitals with 10,000 leper inmates are being served by Indian and foreign Christians.

Lately a Hindu friend advised Gandhi to include the training of cooks in his "uplift" program for the Untouchables, as if it were a new venture. Missionaries have been doing such pioneer work in their homes for centuries, and that with considerable success.

Under the headline: *Rights Are Proposed for India's Untouchables* the Associated Press informed us in May regarding "The clause, which goes into the constitution being drafted as the basic law for an independent India, would make observance of the system of untouchability a penal offence." Thus the framers of the proposed constitution are including a fundamental right for each of the 50 million Untouchables which the Missions and the Church have rigidly and conscientiously observed and put into effect for more than a century.

In the March, 1946, number of *Roshni* magazine, organ of the All-India Women's Conference, an officer of the organization writes: "If we are really keen on abolishing untouchability, let us educate Untouchable girls to become nurses, midwives, teachers and doctors. That will give

them an entrance straightway into society." Exactly, that is what the Church has been doing for over 75 years with the result that one of every 1,200 Christians is a nurse, whereas only one of every 454,000 among the non-Christians.

Two of our missionaries once were fellow-passengers with the Hindu Congress leader of Eastern Central Provinces, which includes our mission field. He complained that his party could get no Congress members to serve out in the villages away from the railroads, even for a good salary, and added: "India's rural people have more love for you missionaries than for us, because you voluntarily live in the villages right in their midst to serve them for life." He regretted that India is slow to learn the virtue of service. Following the ideal set by the founder Rev. O. Lohr, almost all our missionaries are "rural missionaries." In 1868 he came to Chhattisgarh, the heart of India, but did not settle in the city of Raipur after a 180-mile trip from Nagpur in oxcarts during the hot month of May,—here he might have had some of the city conveniences, English fellowship, opportunities to meet educated, high caste Hindus, businessmen to help meet his daily necessities, as well as all the Government officials of the District, and even though it was suggested to him that he settle there, he declined. On he went, another 37 miles through the jungles, to be among the most depressed rural class of people in that part of India. Here, in low lying land he lived in tents and temporary huts with his family until more permanent quarters could be built. Here among the despised Chamar (leather workers) caste he began his village uplift work, his rural reconstruction, his village industries, his educational work for the underprivileged, his health campaigns for those who were victims of quacks and superstitions. Here he started industrial work; teaching the unteachable outcastes masonry, printing, carpentry, backsmithing and tailoring. Here

he taught the farmers how to improve their cattle, how to choose good seed, and above all, how to lead a wholesome family life.

India soon took notice of these pioneer forms of service. Throughout the years one reads appreciative remarks in the various newspapers and magazines. This one is typical: "In the social, educational and humanitarian works the missions have helped India considerably. They have built many schools and colleges, some of which are the best in India, famous for their high standard, discipline and efficiency. Missionary hospitals and clinics are well equipped and efficiently and orderly run. They have given us that social sense and a sense of community without much of that communal cancer" (I. S. R., Oct. 26, 1946).

Christian Service Impresses India

This leads us to another important and valuable contribution which the Church has been making to India, namely, the dignity and beauty of service.

I have read the "Gita," the primary Hindu scripture, several times and find only two references to "service." 1) "By serving the religious teacher he will teach thee knowledge," in other words it is the limited, narrow service a pupil renders to his religious preceptor in exchange for the knowledge imparted. 2) "It is the duty of the shudra (the Untouchables) to serve others,"—this has led to slavery and serfdom. Neither of these two religious injunctions inculcates the spirit of impartial service to all who are in need, irrespective of class or social status.

India is being more and more deeply impressed with the ideal of impartial, unselfish service exemplified by the Church. Perhaps Dr. Emil Brunner gives us the clue to the reason for this growing appreciation on the part of Hindus when he refers to "God giving Himself in Christ": "No philosophy (and every known school of philosophy was represented in India ages ago, D.) has such a conception of love, nor does it appear in any religious teaching outside the Bible," (Revelation and Reason, p. 46). On the contrary, one prominent dogma of Hindu philosophy is the doctrine of *Karma*,—man must reap in this or a future birth what he has sown in this or a past life; hence it is contrary to the rigid law of *Karma* to relieve suffering, to serve the lepers or the outcastes who are paying the price for sin of the past. Because this law of *Karma* has stifled the best traits of the Indian character, Rev. A. Ralla Ram accuses Hindu philosophy: "India is a land in which the pall of Karma has played havoc with the minds of men," (p. 473 in the Jan-

uary number of *Theology of Today*). One should add that it has not only played havoc with the mind, reason and intellect of India, but also with the heart of India.

Prof. D. S. Sarma, Hindu professor of philosophy in Benares Hindu University, substantiates Rev. Ralla Ram's indictment of the *Karma* doctrine: "We have been remiss in the matter of social service, and *wrong* in interpreting the law of Karma," (p. 639, *Studies in the Renaissance of Hinduism*). We ask, when and how did Hindu philosophers of today become aware of this their wrong interpretation, and what is causing them to revise their definition, if it is not the Gospel? Dr. Sarma himself gives one explanation: "It must be confessed that the emphasis which our religious leaders, especially those belonging to the (reform) Samaj movement and the Ram Krishna Mission, have laid on social *service* is due to the object lessons provided by Christian Missions, whose source is the Gospel and example Christ."

Dr. Sarma thus verifies what Rev. Ralla Ram relates in the same article quoted above, (p. 479): "The womanhood of India is a thrice blessed phenomenon and one in the advance of which Indian Christian womanhood has played a most noteworthy part. While only 2% of the people are Christians today, fully 50% of Indian women doctors are Christian, and the Church has supplied a preponderant number of women teachers. Only recently the Punjab Government passed a measure to cease recruiting from the Christian community until other communities can supply their share. Ideals of *service* have been exalted in such a way that they have become the source of inspiration for millions."

In his latest book *Caste and Outcaste* (1946), J. E. Sanjana, a Parsi, quotes this tribute from an outstanding Hindu: "About the Christian missionary spirit Sir S.

Chetty said in his convocation address at Anamalai University: 'In my own experience I have come across the silent and unostentatious work done by Christian missionaries in remote and unheard of villages and hamlets; and I have often asked myself the question: Why is it that in spite of all its great philosophy the Hindu religion has not kindled this spirit in the hearts of its votaries? The missionary spirit of social service seems to be alien to our temperament and upbringing,' " (P. 181.) To this the author adds: "Untold numbers of missionaries have gone to the end of the world, literally buried themselves among and become one in word and deed and spirit with the lowly and the heavy laden, primitives and savages, outcastes and lepers." (190.)

Another Indian writer recently aired his views quite strongly in the Hindu weekly "I. S. R." (Dec. 7, 1946) while weighing the results of Hinduism's law of *Karma* over against the Christian law of love and service: "It is again the perverted ideal of salvation, which is responsible for the institution of caste-structure and the slavery of Hindu women, the two causes of Hindu weakness. We are told by religious parasites (Brahmin priests?) that the salvation of *Shudras* lies in serving the *Dvijas* (twice born Brahmins), who are supposed to be nearer God due to their good *Karmas* (deeds) in their previous lives; and that the salvation of women lies in serving their husbands, who are of course permitted to marry any number of times whether according to their whims or for the sake of male issue, without whose birth the doors of Heaven are deemed to be shut to the Hindu. Our motto should be *Service First*, and salvation afterwards."

It is interesting to note the channels into which the Christian ideal of service is flowing. The All-India Women's Conference referred to above, is one such channel. In addi-

tion to their few Christian members there are many others who are acquainted with the work of the Y.W.C.A. whose Christian program of service is becoming to them an inspiration to "do likewise." In their April number of the magazine *Roshni*, 1946, we read as follows: "A sister told me with much sorrow how she had met so many widows and discarded wives. How to teach them a craft? Where to keep them while they are learning it? An insurmountable problem. Often enough their families do not want them to earn their own living and become economically independent. Our Women's Conference should try to have hostels in every town where women for whom life is hard at home or where orphaned girls can find shelter. They should be on the pattern of hostels run by the Y.W.C.A.; women are needed to run such hostels, but they must be women with *missionary* zeal." This same group of progressive Indian women admire another phase of Christian pioneer work: "The Y.W.C.A. in New Delhi have recently started a small school for servants' children on their verandah. It is good to see as many as sixteen boys and girls learning to read and write, play games and have attention paid to their manners, personal cleanliness and discipline. I wish every one of our members would take up work like this in their homes."

The January 26, 1947, issue of Gandhi's weekly, *Harijan*, both the Marathi and the English edition, contained an interesting news item in which credit was given the Church for its pioneer work in serving the lepers: "Shri Manohar Divan has been carrying on *service* almost single handed around Wardha. He has been able to do so because he has dedicated his life to it. He has acquired the necessary knowledge for it from a Christian Leprosy Institution. But he still remains a solitary life-worker in the cause. Till now, leprosy patients have been mostly served by Christian missionaries only. Hinduism gave us the term *bhut-daya*, compassion for life,

extended to animals, but we missed the nearer object, man. The urge to serve man is more prominent among Christians."

In perusing Indian edited newspapers and magazines it is very noticeable how frequently the term "service" is now appearing in their columns; it is not only penetrating into the thinking of non-Christians more and more during the past years, but it is being increasingly put into practice as an ideal which will help to unite India and advance her progress. The Christian example of humble, unselfish service as increasingly demonstrated by the Church is firing the imagination of India's best sons and daughters, and inspiring them with dynamic visions of a new and better India.* The Church can no longer claim a monopoly of service to the lepers, the sick, the needy, the poor, the orphaned, the widows, the Untouchables, and to the victims of epidemics. Some decades ago this ideal gripped only leaders of reform sects, but is now infiltrating into all the educated groups. In all humility the Church can take satisfaction from the fact that Indians are taking up with alacrity the work of service in which she has been the pioneer. The following paragraph appearing in the Hindu I.S.R. (Nov. 9, 1946) breathes this new spirit of service with enthusiasm: "Hindu

* Two tributes to the service of missionaries appearing in the February 16, 1947, number of "The Illustrated Weekly of India" are indeed worthy of repetition, coming from India's two leaders. For the opening of a home for lepers Gandhi wrote this greeting: "Missionaries are sent for a purpose, to be heralds of God and His revelation to mankind. Service of lepers is very dear to the missionary because no other form of service requires so great a spirit of sacrifice. A leper colony calls for high idealism and perfect disinterestedness."—"It is further significant that when Pandit Nehru visited Bihar (where Hindus had caused so much harm and devastation during the riots), a missionary took him around certain Muslim refugee camps and on a tour of looted and burnt villages. Whatever one's religious views may be one has to admit that India cannot do without the help she is getting in the social field from missionaries and the training in character her young ones can obtain in mission-run schools and colleges."

leaders have both a duty towards their mother country and towards their religion, culture and their Hindu brethren. It is absolutely necessary that the Hindus should organize themselves, work together as one man, produce a band of selfless patriotic workers, with *service* as their sole aim, and forget all differences between castes." It is significant that the daily newspaper *Hindu* of Madras devoted one and a half columns to Dr. John Matthai's address to the All-India Christian Conference in Bombay, January of this year. Dr. John Matthai is the Christian member of the Interim Committee, consisting of fourteen members and now conducting the Government under Mr. Nehru's leadership. The conference received messages of greetings from Mr. Nehru, his sister Mrs. Pandit, and other political leaders. In his address Dr. Matthai appealed to Indian Christians to regard themselves primarily as the *servants* of the country and so organize their resources as to be a spearhead of national service. They must heal the wounds and soften the asperities in the body politic of the country. . . . As a community he felt that Christians in India had no reason to be unduly apprehensive of the future. They claimed no special privileges and asked for no special favors. Our one special responsibility is to regard ourselves primarily as *servants* of the country, and foster a greater sense of unity. . . . Let us not abandon the right to preach, but exercise the right with due care for social harmony and order,—to do so not from political motives but from interest in truth, not in a spirit of antagonism to other faiths, but of sympathy and respect for them, not as a matter of partisan controversy but with an honest desire for *service*."

The Church's Message: Peace and Unity

At its recent Triennial Conference the National Christian Council, which speaks for practically all Protestant missions and churches in India, expressed its belief that "in a self-governing India the Church will be in a more advantageous position than ever before to give testimony by her life, service and teaching to the redeeming power of the Lord Jesus Christ in personal, national and international life."

At the recent conference of our own Evangelical and Reformed Church in India, which is an integral part of the United Church of Northern India, the following resolutions were adopted. These are very much in harmony with the sentiments and wishes of most missionaries and Indian Christians throughout India:

- 1) We rejoice with the people of India in their near-realization of self-government, and extend to them our best wishes for a glorious future.

- 2) We as Christians and ministers have a great ministry to perform in relation to the new Indian Government and the whole political situation confronting us today, namely, the ministry of reconciliation. We should therefore do our best to seek the good will of all and try to bring about communal harmony and good will between Moslems and Hindus through selfless *service* to both of these communities. This ministry of reconciliation is inherent in our Christian faith and in the Gospel we have come to proclaim.

- 3) We as missionaries and ministers of the Gospel also owe loyalty to the first Indian Government of India, which has assumed great responsibility at this time of domestic and international unrest.

In other words, it is the Church which must continue to preach the Gospel in order to supply the dynamic for India to serve and bring unity and harmony among her peoples. India is not slow in recognizing this source of power necessary for establishing peace between her many antagonistic groups and for the many other tasks before her.

Christians are peacemakers. In a meeting of the Christian Association in Nagpur I heard Mr. Rajagopalacharya, Prime Minister of Madras Presidency, assure the audience that the Christians are to be congratulated for having their Christian groups (11,550 organized and 9,875 unorganized congregations) located in all parts of India where they may serve as peacemakers between the larger groups which are antagonistic towards each other.—A year later when communal disturbances between Hindus and Moslems were at their height in many parts of India, Protestant and Catholic Christians of Nagpur arranged a Christmas Peace Party to which they invited leading Hindus, Moslems, Parsis and Untouchables. The non-Christian spokesmen congratulated them for their splendid efforts “to establish peace by promoting good will among the people by contacts of individual friendship.” — In a certain city in South India Christians also arranged a peace-party. In his address the Hindu Secretary of the Local Congress Party said: “Though we Hindus and Moslems are in an overwhelming majority, it is worthy of mention that Christians, who are a small number, should have taken the trouble to get up this meeting to bring both communities together so that they could live in harmony and peace. I am an old student of a Mission School, and from that time I have been noticing that Christians have been the prime movers in matters of reconciliation, and they live a life of peace and they want others to live in peace.” (Eph. 2: 14.)

In his book “Caste and Outcaste” which appeared in

1946, Mr. J. E. Sanjana, a Parsi who has been studying the communal question in India for 40 years, has come to this conclusion: "It may require a third party to help achieve unity. I venture to think that we already possess a very promising nucleus of such a third party in our Indian Christians. As a matter of fact, the Indian Christians ought to form the much needed bridge between the Hindus and the Muslims in the matter of politics. . . . I am not a Christian, but after giving long and careful thought to the two major Indian problems,—the communal one and that of untouchability—I suggest that the Untouchables, the Aborigines and some millions of touchable but low and unclean castes should, for their own good and the ultimate good of the country, enter the Christian fold. . . . There is no escape from the conclusion that it would be immensely to the advantage of the country and all its teeming million down-trodden Untouchables, Aborigines, etc., themselves, if they cease to be Hindus and embrace either Islam or Christianity." (P. 176, 172.)

It happened a few years ago that the leading officials, lawyers, teachers and business men of Mahasamund, where we were living at the time, arranged an evening celebration to honor the memory of Bengal's famous poet, R. Tagore. The writer also received an invitation to attend. In the midst of his address the senior lawyer, an orthodox Hindu and friend, suddenly digressed from his eulogy of Tagore and spoke as follows: "It is a shame that Rev. Davis is sitting here in our midst,"—all eyes opened wider, for it was during the dangerous and tumultuous 1942 non-cooperation days. He continued: "I repeat, it is a disgrace that Rev. and Mrs. Davis are among us. But why are they here?" And pointing to the lighted cross shining in the church tower about a half mile away, he said: "I'll tell you why they are here; it is due to the event which that shining

cross represents." And for ten minutes he gave a marvelous description of the serving and suffering Jesus which culminated in His crucifixion. No missionary could have done it better. He had been a student in mission schools.

Another incident occurred in Mahasamund when about eighty-five of the town's leading men were present. The Commissioner and his wife had come from Raipur to address the group in the assembly hall of our Mission school on the subject of Adult Education and made a strong plea that it was their duty to take up the work and help illiterate adults to learn to read. She concluded her address with this touching story: "I was in England and while visiting London saw an eleven-year-old girl standing before a movie-house admiring the large display of pictures showing tigers and other wild animals to advertise the movie *The Bengal Lancer*. I asked her if she wished to see the cinema, but she said, 'No,' that she was merely interested in India. Asking the reason I received the reply: 'My parents died while doing missionary work in India, and I am preparing myself to go there and take their place when I grow older.' With tears in her eyes the official's wife asked the audience: 'Isn't it a shame that a girl in London should feel the compulsion to come here and serve our India and do the work you and I should be doing?'"

In a spirit of haughtiness and ridicule a Hindu once taunted a simple Christian evangelist: "Your Jesus said that you should wash each other's feet, why don't you do so?" The evangelist replied: "Your Hindu scriptures teach that the Untouchables were born from the feet of your God, —we are cleansing and purifying and lifting the Untouchables, the feet of India. But you forget the rest of the story. Peter said to Jesus: 'Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head.' Now your scriptures also teach that the Brahmins were born from the head of your God,

the Gospel we are preaching is also washing their hands, so that they may be willing to serve, and their heads so that their thinking may become purified."

N. Tilak was such a high caste Hindu who experienced this cleansing, dynamic power of the Resurrected Christ. After his conversion he became the Christian lyrical poet of Western India. Hindus and Christians sing his songs to this day. The fact that he became a Christian did not denationalize him, on the contrary, it made him a more loyal son of India, as expressed in his poem, "India's Glorious Future."

"Ah, Aryan land, blest, blest is she!
A magic might is in her name;
Unrivalled stands her ancient fame;
And we, her sons, thrice blessed are we!

"Hail, happy omens! Presaging
The goal of all my country's woes—
Pledge that from out her travail-throes
A new and glorious birth shall spring.

"Yea, at the end of pregnant strife,
Enthroned as Guru of the earth,
This land of Hind shall teach the worth
Of Christian faith and Christian life.

"In sooth her name, in letters bright,
Before all other names, I trow,
Is writ, Lord Christ, upon thy brow;
And her to serve is my delight."

